

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 172464
ORIGIN EUR-12

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TO AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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SUBJECT: NORWEGIAN-SOVIET FISHERIES TALKS

REF: OSLO 3032

1. SUMMARY: NORWEGIAN MINISTER COUNSELOR DISCUSSED JUNE
12-16 MOSCOW MEETING OF NORWEGIAN SOVIET FISHERIES COMMIS-
SION WITH EUR/NE OFFICE DIRECTOR. KEY ISSUE IN TALKS WAS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 172464

SOVIET VIEW OF THE SVALBARD FISHERIES PROTECTION ZONE.
SOVIET ATTITUDE DUR-NG DISCUSSION DID NOT RPT NOT INDICATE
WHETHER SOVIETS WOULD COMPLY WITH THESE FISHING REGULATIONS,
ALTHOUGH NORWEGIANS HOPE THEY WILL DO SO. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER COUNSELOR BARTH OF NORWEGIAN EMBASSY CALLED ON
EUR/NE COUNTRY DIRECTOR ON JULY 6 TO DISCUSS THE JUNE 12-16

MEETING OF THE NORWEGIAN SOVIET FISHERIES COMMISSION IN MOSCOW.

3. BARTH SAID THE COMMISSION MET SEMIANNUALLY USUALLY AT THE WORKING LEVEL, BUT THAT NORWAY HAD RAISED THE REPRESENTATION AT THE JUNE MEETING TO THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL BECAUSE OF ITS INTEREST IN DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NORTH.

4. THERE WERE TWO MAIN ISSUES: THE FUTURE LIFE OF THE GREY ZONE AGREEMENT, AND THE FISHERIES PROTECTION ZONE AROUND SVALBARD.

5. THE GREY ZONE AGREEMENT WILL BE EXTENDED FOR ANOTHER YEAR, AND WILL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL JULY 1, 1979.

6. THE FISHERIES PROTECTION ZONE WAS NOT ON THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING, BUT WAS DISCUSSED BETWEEN MINISTERS BOLLE AND ISHKOV. BARTH'S PERSONAL IMPRESSION IS THAT THE DISCUSSION WENT ABOUT AS ONE WOULD EXPECT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIETS TO GO. THE NORWEGIANS WERE STILL LOOKING AT THE FINE PRINT TO DISCOVER WHAT SOVIET INTENTIONS REALLY WERE.

7. ISHKOV REFERRED TO A DEMARCHE BY THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN OSLO ON MAY 22, 1977, IN WHICH THE AMBASSADOR ASSERTED THAT THE NORWEGIAN REGULATIONS ON THE FISHERIES PROTECTION

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 172464

ZONE DID NOT COMPLY WITH THE SPITZBERGEN TREATY. BARTH SAID THAT AMBASSADOR VINDENES ATTACHED IMPORTANCE TO THE FACT THAT THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S DEMARCHE HAD BEEN ONLY AN ORAL ONE.

8. THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE OF EMPHASIS IN THE SOVIET POSITION. IT APPEARS THAT THE SOVIETS DO NOT WANT TO FOCUS ATTENTION ON THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE SVALBARD FISHERIES PROTECTION ZONE. THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION ARGUED THAT ONLY NORWAY HAD LEGAL BASIS TO ESTABLISH FISHERIES REGULATIONS IN THE AREA. THE RUSSIANS CRITICIZED THE REGULATIONS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY WERE ISSUED WITHOUT THE PRIOR AGREEMENT OF THE SOVIET UNION. THE RUSSIANS ARGUED THAT NEIGHBORS HAVE A COMMON RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT COMMON FISHERIES STOCKS. THE NORWEGIANS ACCEPTED THIS PROPOSITION, BUT REPLIED THAT ACCEPTING SUCH COMMON RESPONSIBILITY DID NOT MEAN THAT FISHERIES REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO SVALBARD MUST BE AGREED TO BY BOTH PARTIES BEFORE THEY ARE ANNOUNCED. NORWAY WAS WILLING TO DISCUSS SUCH AGREEMENTS IN ADVANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION, BUT IF THEY DISAGREED NORWAY WOULD RESERVE ITS RIGHTS UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW. THE

NORWEGIANS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THEY HAD DISCUSSED THE SVALBARD FISHERIES PROTECTION ZONE WITH THE RUSSIANS MANY TIMES.

9. THE BIG QUESTION WAS WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION WOULD COMPLY WITH THE REGULATIONS COVERING THE ZONE. THE MOSCOW MEETING DID NOT CLARIFY THE SOVIET POSITION. THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT HOPES THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL INSTRUCT ITS FISHERMEN TO OBEY THE REGULATIONS. THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTS OF SOVIET FISHING IN THE PROHIBITED ZONES AROUND WEST

SPITZBERGEN AND BEAR ISLAND, AND THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO BE COMPLYING WITH THE JULY 1 RESTRICTIONS ON MESH SIZES.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 STATE 172464

10. THE SOVIET VESSELS, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO IGNORE REPORTING REGULATIONS. ISHKOV TOLD BOLLE THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD PROVIDE INFORMATION ON CATCHES TO THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT IF THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE THEM INFORMATION ON THE AMOUNTS CAUGHT BY OTHER NATIONS. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW THIS ARRANGEMENT WOULD WORK. THE VESSELS OF THE EEC AND OTHERS REPORT THEIR CATCHES DIRECTLY TO THE NORWEGIAN FISHING AUTHORITIES. THE RUSSIANS APPEAR TO BE PROPOSING A REPORTING SYSTEM IN WHICH ALL SOVIET CATCHES WOULD BE REPORTED BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT TO THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT. THIS RAISES A COMPLEX ISSUE WHICH MUST BE DISCUSSED WITHIN THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT PRIOR TO MAKING A FINAL DECISION ON HOW TO PROCEED.

11. IN ADDITION TO MINISTER BARTH AND EUR/NE DIRECTOR FUNSETH, FINN BERGESEN, NORWEGIAN EMBASSY, AND ROBERT GREY, EUR/NE, WERE ALSO PRESENT AT THE MEETING. VANCE

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